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Garrett Morris

Garrett Isaac Morris (born February 1, 1937) is an American actor, comedian, writer, and singer.[1] He was part of the original cast of the sketch comedy program *Saturday Night Live*, appearing from 1975 to 1980, and played Jimmy on *The Jeffersons* (1983–1984). Morris had one of the starring roles as Junior "Uncle Junior" King on the sitcom *The Jamie Foxx Show*, which aired from 1996 to 2001. Morris also had a starring role as Earl Washington on the CBS sitcom *2 Broke Girls*, from 2011 to 2017. He is also known for his role in the sitcom *Martin* as Stan Winters, from 1992 to 1995 until he suffered an injury. Also, he made two guest appearances on *The Wayans Bros.* in season one, episode one as himself and again on episode ten as the brothers' uncle Leon (1995). He played a concerned teacher in the film *Cooley High (1975)*, Slide in *Car Wash* (1976), and Carl in *The Census Taker* (1984).

Garrett Morris

Morris in 2013

Born	Garrett Isaac Morris February 1, 1937 New Orleans, Louisiana, U.S.
Education	Dillard University Juilliard School of Music
Occupation(s)	Actor, comedian, singer
Years active	1960–present
Known for	*Saturday Night Live* *The Wayans Bros* *The Jamie Foxx Show* *2 Broke Girls*
Spouse	Freda Morris (m. 1996)

Early life and career

Morris was born on February 1, 1937, in New Orleans, Louisiana, and grew up in the poverty-stricken Gert Town neighborhood in its 17th Ward.[2] A church-choir singer from his youth, he trained at the Juilliard School of Music and graduated from Dillard University in 1958. Early in his career, he performed with The Belafonte Folk Singers. In 1960 Garret Morris recorded *South African Freedom Songs* (EPC-601) with Pete Seeger and Guy Carawan for Folkways Records.[3] He performed in a number of Broadway musicals, including *Hallelujah, Baby!* and *Ain't Supposed to Die a Natural Death*. In 1965, he worked alongside Amiri Baraka, Sun Ra, Albert Ayler and Sonia Sanchez at the Black Arts Repertory Theatre/School in Harlem; during this period, the theater was frequently raided and surveilled by the New York City Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.[4][5] He had a small role as a police sergeant in *The Anderson Tapes* (1971) and was a cast member in the short-lived CBS sitcom, *Roll Out*. He also appeared as a high school teacher in the 1975 film *Cooley High*.

Morris also lived in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Saturday Night Live

Morris has appeared in numerous television shows and films since the early 1970s, but is best known as one of the original cast members of NBC's *Saturday Night Live*.[6] Periodically on *SNL* he sang classical music: once a Mozart aria "Dalla Sua Pace", Don Ottavio's aria from *Don Giovanni* when guest-host Walter Matthau designated him as a "musical guest...in place of the usual crap", and once a Schubert *lied* while the titles on the screen expressed his colleagues' purported displeasure at having to accommodate a misguided request by him. In February 1977, he sang Tchaikovsky's *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt* barefoot in colorful Caribbean dress while subtitles explained he had just returned from Jamaica where he had picked up a girl by claiming to be Harry Belafonte.

One of Morris' best known characters on *SNL* was the Dominican baseball player Chico Escuela. Chico spoke only limited and halting English, so the joke centered on his responding to almost any question with his catch phrase: "Baseball... been berra berra good... to me". Another recurring bit, used in the newscast segment *Weekend Update*, involved Morris being presented as "President of the New York School for the hard of hearing" and assisting the newscaster by shouting the main headlines, in a parody of the then-common practice of providing sign language interpretation in an inset on the screen as an aid to the deaf viewer.

According to the book *Saturday Night: A Backstage History of Saturday Night Live*, Morris was frequently unhappy during his tenure on *SNL* from 1975 to 1980, and expressed the opinion that he was usually typecast in stereotypical roles.[7] Black performers who have followed Morris on *SNL* have at times been publicly concerned with experiencing the same fate Morris did. Eddie Murphy, for example, told *TV Guide* in the early 1980s that *SNL* producer Jean Doumanian "had tried to Garrett Morris me".[7]

Recurring characters

- Chico Escuela, a Dominican baseball player for the New York Mets
- Cliff, the streetwise friend to the Festrunk Brothers (Dan Aykroyd and Steve Martin)
- Grant Robinson, Jr., one of The Nerds
- Hodo, one of Miles Cowperthwaite's cronies
- Merkon, the leader of the Coneheads
- *Weekend Update*'s "News for the Hard of Hearing" translator, who simply repeated each line while shouting with his hands cupped around his mouth.

Later life and career

In 1976, Morris appeared in the film *Car Wash*, playing the role of Slide the bookmaker. In 1983 and 1984, Morris appeared in five episodes of *The Jeffersons*, playing a character named Jimmy. He starred in the 1984 film *The Census Taker*, a 1984 black comedy directed by Bruce R. Cook.[8][9]

In 1985, he appeared in Larry Cohen's science fiction horror film *The Stuff*, playing cookie magnate "Chocolate Chip Charlie", a parody of Famous Amos. That year he also guested on *Murder, She Wrote* as "Lafayette Duquesne". In 1986, Morris began playing a regular occasional character, "Arnold 'Sporty' James", on the NBC cop drama *Hunter*, starring Fred Dryer and Stepfanie Kramer. Morris appeared in *Married... with Children* as Russ, one of Al's poker buddies, in "The Poker Game", in a 1987 season 1 episode and again in the season 3 episode "Requiem for a Dead Barber". Garrett Morris continually appeared as "Sporty" on *Hunter* through 1989. He also appeared in the 1992 horror comedy *Severed Ties* starring Oliver Reed.

In 1994, he was "shot by a would-be mugger", whom he "attempted to fight off", but recovered as he discussed on the January 14, 2016, episode of Marc Maron's podcast *WTF*. On Howard Stern's radio show on July 20, 1995, Morris said the culprit was imprisoned not for the shooting, but for parole violations for other crimes. In another radio interview, he mentioned that the robber who shot him was eventually convicted and incarcerated. In prison, inmates who happened to be fans of Morris teamed up and beat up the robber in revenge.[10] At the time of the shooting, Morris was starring on *Martin* as Martin's first boss, Stan Winters. Morris' shooting rendered him temporarily unable to continue in the role; he was written out of the show by having the character become a national fugitive. The scene where he is about to undergo plastic surgery was shot on the hospital bed Morris occupied while recuperating from the 1994 assault. He made a final appearance as Stan during the show's third season, walking with a cane due to Morris' real injuries, but the reason given for Stan was that he had crashed his car during a police chase.

Morris also had regular roles on *Diff'rent Strokes*, *The Jeffersons*, *Hill Street Blues*, *227*, and *Roc*. He also appeared in an episode of *Who's the Boss*, "Sam's Car" (1989), playing the role of Officer Audette. He was a regular cast member on *The Jamie Foxx Show*, playing Jamie's uncle, Junior King, for the show's entire run.

In 1998, Morris appeared as himself in the fourth episode of the fifth season of the TV series, *Space Ghost Coast to Coast*. In 2002, Morris made a cameo appearance on an episode of *Saturday Night Live* hosted by Brittany Murphy. In 2006, Morris reprised his role as "Headmaster of the New York School for the Hard of Hearing" in a cameo on the TV series *Family Guy*, in the episode "Barely Legal". He continued to perform regularly in films. He also operated and was the host of his own comedy club, The Downtown Comedy Club, in downtown Los Angeles. On February 9, 2007, Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa honored Garrett Morris for his work and contributions to the black community. He declared February 9, 2007, Garrett Morris Day and named The Downtown Comedy Club the official club of Los Angeles. In August 2008, Morris played the role of Reverend Pratt in the family comedy drama film, *The Longshots*, starring Ice Cube and Keke Palmer.

In 2009, Morris appeared in two TV commercials for the Nintendo DS—one featuring *Mario Kart DS*, and the other featuring *Brain Age: Train Your Brain in Minutes a Day!*. In 2010, Morris appeared in a television commercial for Miller Lite. The national commercial, titled "PopPop", features Morris alongside actors Stacey Dash and Jason Weaver.[11] The commercial takes a light-hearted look at a family relationship with Morris playing the grandfather, PopPop, and Weaver as his grandson. Since summer 2010, Morris has appeared in an ad for Orbit gum in the United States. In 2011, Morris had a cameo role as a Catholic priest on the episode "Three Boys" on the Showtime series *Shameless*. He was cast as Earl in the CBS comedy *2 Broke Girls*,[12] which premiered on September 19, 2011. During the second season he faced a lawsuit from the Global Agency accusing him of not paying 10% of his income from the show as agreed. However, a rep from the show stated that he had not actually failed to do so.[13]

In 2015, Morris appeared in a cameo in *Ant-Man*, referencing an old *SNL* sketch in which he played the first live-action incarnation of the character.[14] On September 9, 2016, Morris and his family appeared on the ABC's game show *Celebrity Family Feud*, playing against Alfonso Ribeiro and Ribeiro's friends.[15] In 2018, Morris appeared in the NBC show *This Is Us*. In 2019, Morris appeared in the fifth episode of *A Black Lady Sketch Show*, titled "Why Are Her Pies Wet, Lord?".

Filmography

Film

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1970	*Where's Poppa?*	Garrett	
1971	*The Anderson Tapes*	Sgt. Everson	
1975	*Cooley High*	Mr. Mason	
1976	*Car Wash*	Slide	
1980	*How to Beat the High Cost of Living*	Power & Light Man	
1984	*The Census Taker*	Harvey	
1985	*The Stuff*	"Chocolate Chip Charlie" W. Hobbs	
1987	*Critical Condition*	Helicopter Junkie	
	The Underachievers	Dummont	
1989	*Dance to Win*	-	
1991	*Children of the Night*	Matty	
	Motorama	Andy	
	Blackbird Fly	-	Short film
1992	*Severed Ties*	Stripes	
1993	*Coneheads*	Capt. Orecruiser	
1995	*Black Scorpion*	Argyle	
1996	*Black Rose of Harlem*	Wisdom	
	Santa with Muscles	Clayton	
	Almost Blue	Charles	
1997	*Black Scorpion II*	Argyle	
1999	*Twin Falls Idaho*	Jesus	
	Palmer's Pick-Up	Tom Bolza	
	Graham's Diner	—	
2001	*Jackpot*	Lester Irving	
	How High	PCC Agent	
2003	*Connecting Dots*	Henry	
2005	*The Salon*	Percy	
2007	*Implanted*	Kadar	Short film

	Who's Your Caddy?	The Reverend	
	Frank	Billy Hamilton	
	Amenic	Amenic	Short film
2008	*Dog Gone*	Police Chief	
	The Longshots	Reverend Pratt	
2009	*Bed Ridden*	Billings	Short film
	Just Like Family	Leroy	
	Sonny Dreamweaver	God	
2010	*Pickin' & Grinnin'*	Richard A. Trophey	
2011	*Valley of the Sun*	Joe	
	Let Go	Donuts	
2012	*Pawn Shop*	Rey	
	Freeloaders	Mr. Abaeze	
2015	*Ant-Man*	Cab Driver	
2019	*Grand-Daddy Day Care*	Arnold	

Television

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1960	*CBS Workshop*	—	Episode: "The Bible Salesman"
1963	*General Hospital*	Mouth	Regular cast
1973	*Roll Out*	Wheels	Main cast
1974	*Change at 125th Street*	Janitor	TV movie
1975–80	*Saturday Night Live*	Himself / cast member	Main cast (season 1–5)
1978	*ABC Weekend Special*	Frank	Episode: "The Seven Wishes of Joanna Peabody"
1980	*Easter Fever*	Jack	Voice role; TV movie
1982	*Diff'rent Strokes*	Santa Claus / Mr. Jones	Episode: "Santa's Helper"
1983	*The Invisible Woman*	Lt. Greg Larkin	TV movie
1983–84	*The Jeffersons*	Jimmy	Guest (season 9); Recurring cast (season 10)
1984	*At Your Service*	Dwayne	TV movie
	Masquerade	Froog	Episode: "The French Correction"
	The New Scooby Doo Mysteries	Additional voices	Season 2
1984–85	*It's Your Move*	Principal Dwight Ellis	Recurring cast
1985	*Murder, She Wrote*	Lafayette Duquesne	Episode: "Murder to a Jazz Beat"

	Hill Street Blues	Derelict	Recurring cast (season 5)
	The Twilight Zone	Jake	Episode: "Dealer's Choice"
	Scarecrow and Mrs. King	Asam Ali Shamba	Episode: "The Wrong Way Home"
	Pound Puppies	Chief Williams	Voice role; TV movie
1986	*The Love Boat*	Gary Samuels	Episode: "The Will / Déjà Vu/ The Prediction"
	New Love, American Style	—	Episode: "Love and the Teddy"
1986–89	*Hunter*	Arnold "Sporty" James	Guest (season 2); Recurring cast (season 3-5)
1987	*227*	Bob Winslow	Episode: "The Working Game"
1987–89	*Married... with Children*	Russ	2 episodes
1988	*Who's the Boss?*	Officer Audette	Episode: "Sam's Car"
1991	*Earth Angel*	Joey	TV movie
1991–92	*Roc*	Wiz	Recurring cast (season 1)
1992	*Maid for Each Other*	Harold Brown	TV movie
1992–95	*Martin*	Stan Winters	Main cast (season 1–2); Guest (season 3)
1993	*Daddy Dearest*	Stan	Episode: "American We"
1994	*ER*	Edgar Luck	Episode: "ER Confidential"
1995	*The Wayans Bros.*	Uncle Leon / Himself	Episode: "Goop-Hair-It-Is" & "The Poppa-Cabana"
	Minor Adjustments	Willie	Episode: "The Ex-Files"
	Cleghorne!	Sidney Carlson	Main cast
1996–2001	*The Jamie Foxx Show*	Uncle Junior King	Main cast
1997	*Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales for Every Child*	Buzzard	Voice role; Episode: "Pinocchio"
	Boston Common	Sammy Sutherland	Episode: "I.D. Endow"
1998	*Space Ghost Coast to Coast*	Himself	Episode: "Cahill"
1999	*G vs E*	Kentucky McQuaid	Episode: "Sunday Night Evil"
2000	*City of Angels*	Dr. Frank Hollister	Episode: "Prototype"
	Static Shock	Preacher	Voice role; Episode: "Child's Play"
	Little Richard	Carl Rainey	TV movie
2001	*Justice League*	Al McGee	Voice role; Episode: "In Blackest Night"
	According to Jim	Lewis	Episode: "The Turkey Bowl"
	The Hughleys	Father Roberts	Episode: "I'm Dreaming of a Slight Christmas"
2003	*Maniac Magee*	Mr. Cobble	TV movie

2005	*Noah's Arc*	Rev. Allen	2 episodes
2006	*All of Us*	Uncle Cyrus	Episode: "Neesee's Grave Plot"
	Family Guy	Himself	Episode: "Barely Legal"
2007	*Halfway Home*	Jimmy the Mailman	Episode: "Halfway Impotent"
	Frangela	Dave	TV movie
2011	*Shameless*	Old Priest	Episode: "Three Boys"
2011–17	*2 Broke Girls*	Earl Washington	Main cast
2013	*Psych*	Clizby	Episode: "100 Clues"
2017	*Rhett & Link's Buddy System*	Ignatius	Recurring cast (season 2)
2018	*MacGyver*	Willy	Episode: "Mardi Gras Beads + Chair"
	Scandal	Hector	Episode: "Army of One"
	Knight Squad	Old Fizzwick	Episode: "Working on the Knight Moves"
	This Is Us	Lloyd	Recurring cast (season 2); Guest (season 3)
2019	*A Black Lady Sketch Show*	Deacon Jones	Episode: "Why Are Her Pies Wet, Lord?"
2020	*Family Reunion*	Grand Sensei Shandu	Episode: "Remember When Shaka Got Beat Up?"
	Station 19	Earl Davis	Episode: "Poor Wandering One"
	Self Made	Cleophus Walker	Main cast
2021	*Fairfax*	Albert	Voice role; Episode: "Fairfolks"
	Grand Crew	Narrator	Episode: "Pilot"
2023	*How I Met Your Father*	Julian	Episode: "Midwife Crisis"

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External links

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